



## **Seasons Greetings from all of us at APOPO**

Dear Friend,

I hope this letter finds you and your loved ones well and enjoying the holiday season. As another year comes to a close here in Tanzania, I am deeply grateful for your support and enthusiasm, which has made our work a reality.

Today, I am happy to reflect on the progress we have made and share some of the year's greatest achievements. In Mozambique, our demining heroes, human and rat alike, found 182 landmines, 248 explosive remnants of war, and 3,871 small arms and ammunition. We have cleared 309,993 square meters of suspected land this year, bringing the total of land released by APOPO through clearance and technical survey in the Gaza province in Southern Mozambique to over 1 Million square meters.

To date, we have helped over 1,074 people to return to their homes and helped heal numerous communities scarred by war by returning valuable land for farms, enabling access to important services, and opening land for the development of infrastructure. I am proud of the impact we have made and delighted to share that this humanitarian work continues to be done at a price significantly better than the accepted average of \$2 per square meter.

Here in Tanzania, our TB detection rats have found over 425 patients this year who were missed by microscopy but thanks to rats have been contacted and asked to return to the hospitals for another test and treatment. Together with the 344 patients diagnosed by rats last year, that totals 769 lives saved. To date, our HeroRATs have increased TB detection rates in the four urban hospitals we work with by 31% and prevented over 8,000 healthy

people from contracting TB!

As I look forward to a new year, I see immense opportunities and potential. This fall we won the Lien i3 challenge for an innovation in humanitarian mine action in Southeast Asia. This grant will allow APOPO to bring HeroRATs there and work with Southeast Asian mine action centers on innovative Land Release approaches. Within the African context, we are planning a co-operation with the Danish Church Aid to support their mine clearance and land release operations with mine detection rats services. Our hope is to have 3 teams, that is 6 handlers and 20 HeroRATs, on the ground in Angola in 2010. Also in Latin America, more specifically in Columbia, there is a keen interest to use APOPO's HeroRATs. Columbia has more landmine victims than any other country in the world, and rats could play a significant role in solving the problem.

For our TB rats, the coming year will be one of continued research and development, in collaboration with renowned research partners, to fine tune the technology and answer the research questions that need to be addressed to standardize the diagnostic tool and make it replicable and scalable.

Again, I thank you for your tireless help and dedication. Wishing you a season of warmth and peace. Happy Holidays from the entire APOPO team!

Best wishes for a Happy New Year,

Bart Weetjens

Founder of APOPO